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CAPITALISM FOREVER (EXCERPT5)

DOCUMENTATION CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM, RELIGION

Preserving the old – that is the common denominator of Muslims and Westerners. Both want that. Both want something that they will never achieve. Both want to remain something they are not, religious on the one hand, enlightened on the other. That's why there's a row. So back to Islam. Is it a particularly bad religion? No, on the contrary.

Christianity was more efficient as a murder machine. The Indians in South America and later in North America were flattened, they hacked each other to death in the Thirty Years' War, the funeral pyres, the torture chambers and the two world wars with around 70 million dead – weren't they Christians? And Auschwitz? Was it the Muslims?

But let's be fair. People murder on the basis of religion; in Northern Ireland, Christians of

various denominations did so until very recently. But they don't necessarily need religion to murder, they can do just as well without it. Nation, tribe or skin colour are also sufficient.

People don't murder because they are Christians or Muslims, but because they are murderers. That's why you have to forbid them from murdering, hence the commandment "Thou shalt not kill!" We don't need commandments like "Eat your fill!" or "Sleep it off!"

The fact is that Islam has comparatively few offences. Presumably for lack of opportunity, I don't think there are huge differences between Christians and Muslims. Although – you can't deny Christianity a particular penchant for sadomasochism. You have to find another religion in this world that makes a half-naked man nailed to a cross and wearing a crown of thorns its icon. Günther Anders tells us somewhere what a terrible horror the crucifix was for him as a child. Practising the desire to mortify oneself and torture others – perhaps this tradition made Christians the most successful world conquerors for a while. But I am no expert on religion and man is a cruel animal, torture techniques probably exist in all cultures. Mao Zedong is said to have been fascinated by the cruelty of the masses and to have incited them in a calculated way in order to eliminate rivals and opponents. And what was it like in ancient Rome?

One more story I have to get rid of. The Lisbon earthquake on 1 November 1755 killed so many people because it took place during a church service and the churches in which the faithful had gathered collapsed.

It hit the right people. An auto-da-fé was scheduled for the afternoon, a burning of heretics that had the character of a folk festival among pious Christians at the time. Incidentally, the last auto-da-fé took place in 1826.

It's always like that. You want to talk about Islam and end up talking about Christianity. New attempt: Let's start with 9/11/2001, the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. Who did it? Osama Bin Laden and his crew, of course. But the script for the horror film came from America. Tom Clancy's bestseller "Debt of Honour" ends with this scene, and his bestseller "Orders from Above" begins with it. The only difference is that the guy who crashes his plane into the Capitol, wiping out the entire political elite including the president, is a vengeful Japanese man in Clancy's film. The thrillers were published in 1994 and 1996, when people still had different images of the enemy.

What does this show us?

Osama bin Laden not only watched American TV series – his favourite was "Fury" – he was also a fan of Tom Clancy. And he was probably familiar with disaster films such as "Earthquake" or "Flaming Inferno". So: where Islamism seems the darkest and most archaic to us, westernisation is the most advanced.

Take Iran, for example: it has a huge drug problem. In Tehran there is a drug-dealing neighbourhood that the police don't dare enter, a neighbourhood with an extremely high crime rate. Like everywhere else, the drug users are young people. The problem is so great that the regime had to recognise its existence and allow the establishment of drug counselling centres. It was a difficult decision, because drug counselling centres really don't fit in with the theocracy.

Or the intifada in Jerusalem and the West Bank: you recognise them again, the same boys, just dressed up differently, who roughed up the city in Paris and London. Neglected youths for whom there is no longer any authority, guidance or support from the family. Just like in the American slums.

Take Iraq, for example: the first businesses to establish themselves were porn cinemas, a goldmine for the operators. The rush was enormous. Only then came mobile phones.

I conclude from this mix of information that Islam is just as rotten and rotten as Christianity in the West. All the conflicts in the Middle East are not really about religion at all, but about politics and who gets to sit at the centre of power and who gets the bigger slice of the cake. Sunnis and Shiites could probably agree on religious issues, but not on who gets to be president and skim off the wealth. This is where tolerance ends. In such conflicts, religion is one excuse among many. In Kenya, the fronts ran along tribal lines.

The unity of Islam is a projection of the West, which, of course, does not remain without effect on the Muslims. They begin to see themselves as they are perceived. That is the usual mechanism.

Fundamentalism is always a symptom of crisis, whether in the USA, the Middle East or here. Or in Israel, it has to be said for current reasons. After all, the Israelis see reason to demonstrate against Jewish religious fanatics. When societies are in a deep crisis, they become unpredictable, and foreign policy always has domestic political reasons. Quite simply: Iran needs nuclear weapons because society is falling apart, Islam can no longer repair it and the state can't get the drug problem among young people under control. The devil knows what will come of it. One thing is certain: it has nothing to do with the Koran.

Islam seems to me like a ruin ready for demolition, but old buildings in danger of collapsing can be life-threatening. Christianity only became really murderous when it began to fall apart, i.e. when the first doubts about the doctrine of faith began to arise. To be able to burn heretics, you need some, and to find them, you need the heretic in your own breast: I only discover unbelievers if I can even imagine such a thing as unbelief. People in the early Middle Ages, for example, couldn't do that. As a result, the aggressiveness of Christianity was limited back then, and it only became really nasty later on.

It's as easy to catch a religion as a cold, but it's damn hard to get rid of it again. When everything seems to be over, the residual waste proves to be resistant to disposal and is discarded. Although the faithful and churches are like the Ten Little Negroes in the counting rhyme, things are moving slowly, and the Vatican, that shining ruin, has no end in sight for its half-life. And until then, there is always the risk of an uncontrolled chain reaction in the scrap heap, as in Fukushima. What you sometimes hear from Christian fundamentalists in America gives cause for concern as to whether the emergency cooling systems are still working. Harrisburg seems to be leaking, but whether this also applies to Christian fundamentalism is unknown. At any rate, they are all afraid of it.

You name a single German politician who says on camera: "Christianity? Religion? I'm not interested in this silly mumbo-jumbo." You name a single person who, when push comes to shove, doesn't play the believer. And why is he pretending? Because he's afraid. Sure, he won't

be stoned to death for it. But he can forget his job. He'll have to switch to cabaret or the feature pages, and the court jesters will be allowed to babble.

There is a lot of projection and psychopathology involved in this fuelled fear of Islam, and the tangle of interests is almost inextricable. The churches, for example, are competing against each other, but all together they behave like a trade association. If mosques are to be built here, the Christian churches support the project. It's all about expanding the market. The main thing is that people are church customers. Then it's just a question of business strategy as to whether they buy my product or that of the competition. Once customers have got used to Rama, they will also buy Sanella.

Competition is good for business, especially in the market of world views. The fundies in Tehran and Washington know exactly what they have in common. Iran and the Taliban – if they didn't exist, they would have to be invented. Unfortunately, they do exist. Everyone creates the enemy they need. US think tanks have demonstrably directed the creation of the Taliban species. And when it comes to Iran, we should not forget that the madman from Paris, who later became Ayatollah, was only so successful because the Western community of values had previously installed a peacock throne there to the delight of German housewives and American oil companies.

But that is history. The present is that all nations are in crisis. In Western countries, people are realising that you can't buy anything for the freedom to rant. And in Islamic countries, they are realising that you can't get anything for Islam either. The putty is crumbling everywhere, but the panes of glass are holding, there are still the nails that were used to fix them before they were cemented.

Such phases of disillusionment are tricky. Why did the Moscow show trials begin in 1936, when the regime was firmly in the saddle? Quite simply, the workers' paradise on earth should have become a reality. But it wasn't. And before the masses realised this, they had to be given a new enemy and a new task.

Why did the Nazis start the war in 1938? Because they had reached the end of their tether. With the best will in the world, there were no more opponents or enemies to be found in Germany, the Nazis were among themselves. The promised national community should actually have existed. But it didn't. The typist had to realise that she could be as Aryan as she wanted and still remain a pathetic typist. What to do? Off to new shores! When we have conquered the world, but then! Then we'll finally have reached the point where every German baboon can play the master race somewhere.

We can only hope that the Muslims in the Arab nations do not orientate themselves on the European or Christian model. May Allah grant that they are smarter.

As clever as the communists have been once in their history. Back in 1989, when the Ossis stole our Deutschmark and made us pay tribute with the solidarity tax. Since the Wall and the Iron Curtain have gone, we no longer have a protective wall. The Eastern Bloc floods the tourist beaches around the Mediterranean, where you used to be king with a Deutschmark in your pocket and now feel like a bum next to nouveau riche Russians. What's in the shop window comes from China, Russia, Poland, Slovakia and so on. The fat German wage earners

with the fat Opel have to learn what a real free market economy feels like, namely Hartz IV.

That's how you have to do it, fight the West with its own weapons. Twenty years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the West is facing national bankruptcy. The average age of the population in the Arab countries is under thirty – a treasure that just needs to be unearthed. And if they manage to do that, Europe will look as old as it is.

Long live capitalism for now!

And we'll talk about socialism when Germany and Uganda have the same standard of living.

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